

Exhibit “C”

January 3, 2025

Honorable John W. Holcomb
United States District Judge
Central District of California
Ronald Reagan Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse
Courtroom 9D, 9th Floor
411 West 4th Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701-4516

Dear Judge Holcomb:

I stand before you with profound regret for running an illegal sports betting operation for so many years. I violated the law knowingly and flagrantly, so I am ready to be held accountable for any harm that may have been caused by my conduct. As I prepare to hear my sentence, I am grateful for the legal process that has forced me to confront the hard truth of my criminal conduct.

Your Honor, I take full responsibility for my illegal acts of bookmaking, money laundering and filing false tax returns. My actions took advantage of compulsive gamblers, some of whom could not afford to risk money on sports betting. I am ashamed of myself for facilitating such self-destructive behavior. Undoubtedly, my bookmaking business hurt individual gamblers and their families who suffered financial and emotional consequences.

I spent the bookmaking proceeds on a lavish lifestyle and my extreme personal gambling habit. I lived in an alternative universe, completely absorbed in sports betting and casino gambling. I took pride in working hard to serve my loyal betting customers. However, my attitudes are changing as I reflect on the negative impact of my reckless behavior.

I am heartbroken about the serious, ongoing harm to my children and other family members. I created chronic risk to their safety by operating a high-stakes, underworld enterprise. To everyone I hurt during those years, I hope my punishment provides some measure of justice. I am committed to paying my full restitution as directed by this Honorable Court.

Since the start of this legal process, I have been thinking about how this experience can be a chance to learn and grow. I share my story in this letter, hoping that by learning more about the entirety of my life, you will see I have faced up to the shame of my crimes with rigorous honesty. I am ready to accept the consequences and move forward in the spirit of atonement and reconciliation.

Family and Upbringing

I was born in Orange, California, on April 4, 1975, as my parents' first child together. My father adopted my mother's two older sons from a previous relationship. My father owned and operated a bail bonds company and my mother worked with him. He learned the bail bonds business from his parents who also owned a bail bonds company. For a while, my dad also sold specialized pneumatic tools. He ran both businesses out of our house in Cypress.

My three brothers and I enjoyed a financially secure upbringing in a safe, middle class neighborhood. I played outside with my neighbors until the streetlights came on. I earned excellent grades, made friends easily, and took piano lessons. We lived near my large extended family who loved and supported my brothers and me.

My father served in combat in Vietnam. After his return from the war zone, he drank alcohol to cope with his trauma. Eventually, he drank 30- 40 cans of beer a day daily while chain-smoking cigarettes. He struggled with PTSD and the long-term effects of exposure to Agent Orange for the rest of his life. Still, my father's innate talent, charisma, and positive attitude shined through. He succeeded in business through hard work and natural ability.

When I was about twelve years old, my mother could no longer tolerate my dad's active alcoholism. So, my parents divorced and my father moved out. My mother worked multiple jobs to keep my brothers and me in that house. She worked for other bail bonds companies, trained as a kidney dialysis tech, and sold Mary Kay and JAFRA cosmetics. She also baked high-end, specialty cakes through her company, Linda's Creative Cakes.

I saw how hard my mother worked and did not want to ask her for money. So, I got a paper route for *The Orange County Register* and sold subscriptions door-to-door. I loved winning over new subscribers and broke all-time sales records.

At age 13, I placed my first sports bet with money I earned. My paternal grandfather gambled frequently, so betting felt like a normal part of life. I remember playing Yahtzee for money with my family members. I also played poker with friends and placed bets on video games.

Simultaneously, I learned how to buy and sell collectible baseball cards. At age 16, I got a job at a baseball card shop and bought my first vehicle with profits from my collection. At Pacifica High School, I competed on the baseball, football, and wrestling teams. Plus, I worked as a cashier at a Chevron gas station and sold programs at Los Alamitos Race Course.

I definitely preferred work to sitting in class. I happily worked long days, on weekends, and during vacations to earn my own money. I stayed active night and day—playing sports, working multiple jobs, and socializing with friends. Also, I spent a lot of time gambling at quite a young age. If I saw my children focusing that much energy on gambling, I would certainly take them aside and tell them to stop.

I started drinking alcohol when I was fifteen years old, but it was gambling that I really craved. Looking back, I think I was about sixteen when I first felt a physical urge to gamble. I discovered early that placing a bet could change my mood and give me a euphoric rush when I won. I could never have imagined where my gambling habit would eventually take me. I would never have believed that gambling could lead me to federal prison as a convicted felon.

Your Honor, I have no excuse for my criminal activity. My parents and grandparents taught me about the justice system while working in the bail bonds business. I always knew it was illegal to run a bookmaking operation. I wish I could have stopped long before I ended up in federal court.

Early Adulthood

After graduating from high school in 1993, I worked at a warehouse filling orders for Massimo clothing. I took an additional cashier job at the John Wayne Airport gift shop. Too often, I lost my earnings and my rent money gambling. I placed sports bets with a local bookmaker and gambled at the racetrack. I told myself that gambling was my passion, but it was actually a very self-destructive addiction.

My then-girlfriend, Monica, who worked as a secretary at a fire safety equipment company, gave birth to our daughter, Lauren, on May 30, 1995. I was 19. I felt excited and scared to become a father at such a young age. Monica, Lauren, and I moved in with my mother and brother in their two-bedroom, doublewide trailer in Dana Point. We all got along well, despite the close quarters and financial pressure.

Many successful people lived in Dana Point, so I looked for ways to meet local professionals. I took a busboy job at the nearby Chevy's restaurant and did my best to serve our customers. A few months later, a regular customer suggested I come to a job interview at Barons Worldwide Financial, a commodity trading firm.

I drove my \$400 car to Irvine where I sat for a two-hour interview. I had no idea what commodity trading was, but I knew I could work hard. After a second interview, Barons hired me to work in the mailroom and assist the firm's owner, Micky Dhillon. I worked from 5:30am until 6pm on weekdays plus four hours on

Saturday. I did whatever Micky asked me to do and completed any other task that came my way.

I got a great education in commodities trading while working for Micky. Then, at age 19, I passed my Series 3 exam on my first try. Micky assigned me to the top broker's team where I proceeded to break every record. I had a natural talent for closing deals and no one could outwork me. Plus, I did not abuse drugs or alcohol, so I worked with a clear head every day.

In 1996, at age 20, Micky asked me to run his new firm, Newhall Discount Futures & Options. I grew the firm to 100 employees and approximately 5000 customers. Meanwhile, Monica and I got married in 1998. We welcomed our daughter Haley on May 30, 1999. I ran Newhall Discount until 2003, the same year our daughter Brooke arrived on August 15th.

Over time, I realized that commodities contracts were bad investments. Most of our clients lost their money. Still, I was trained to close deals and that's what I did. I never stopped to think about the big picture until years later.

I am embarrassed to admit that I gambled away most of my earnings. I probably spent 20 hours a week gambling on top of my intense work schedule. I took perverse pride in pushing the envelope with large bets I could not afford. I routinely risked my family's financial stability and lied to cover up the truth.

To pay for my losses, I started a bookmaking operation. My first sports betting clients were the commodity traders I worked with every day. They were young, single men with extra money and few responsibilities. My bookmaking operation grew quickly and took over all my free time. Like the commodities business, everyone wagered willingly with hopes for big returns. Also like the commodities business, most players lost their money.

As a bookmaker, I made money when players lost. Then I turned around and lost that money at casinos. It was an endless, lunatic cycle of highs and lows. I can hardly believe what I put myself and my family through for so long. I wished I had stopped years ago. I look forward to paying my debt to society and finding a better way to live.

Work and Family Changes

In 2003, I co-founded Aliso Trading Group (ATG) with my brother, Shawn. We ran our business just like Newhall Discount and hired many of the same traders. We grew ATG to about 30 employees and enjoyed solid financial success.

Meanwhile, I set up an online portal in Costa Rica for my sports betting clients, in accordance with Costa Rican laws. This website (anyactionsport.com) processed bets I previously handled over the phone. I grew my bookmaking business through referrals from players I knew. My clientele consisted mostly of high-income, experienced gamblers. I worked hard to deliver a quality service and earned an excellent reputation.

My father passed away in 2004. He was 56. I was 29. He had metastatic lung cancer from smoking 3 packs a day and suffered a subdural hematoma.

Monica and I divorced in 2005. We parted amicably and remain close friends today. I stayed in close contact with my daughters and did not miss their important events. However, I could never be fully present. No matter where I was, my mind obsessed over the bookmaking operation and my personal bets.

In 2007, my brother and I lost our lead source for Aliso Trading Group. We argued over the aftermath and decided to go our separate ways. Shawn stayed with ATG until all the employees and clients disappeared. I became a full-time bookmaker and started dating Rachel, who I met in Las Vegas.

In 2010, Rachel and I welcomed our daughter, Sage. I briefly returned to the commodities business after a string of gambling losses. Sadly, Rachel struggled with mental health issues and alcoholism. These challenges added stress to my demanding routine. In addition to an eight-hour shift closing commodities contracts, I worked on my bookmaking business from 4pm-10pm on weekdays and from 8am-10pm on weekends.

The whole time, I knew my bookmaking operation violated the law. I understood my cash dealings violated money laundering laws. In my mind, I was providing an honorable service for gambling enthusiasts who played willingly. I don't see it that way anymore. Now I feel embarrassed that I broke the law so flagrantly.

Two FBI Raids

In March of 2014, federal agents raided my home. They seized a large amount of cash and questioned me about illegal sports betting. After they left, nothing else happened—no complaint, no arrest, no follow-up visits. I could have taken that raid as a signal to change my ways. Instead, I foolishly resumed my criminal activities. I told myself the universe had given me a “Get Out of Jail Free” card.

Back then, I often spent all day on a casino floor playing baccarat and drinking alcohol while taking bookmaking calls. I felt like a big shot talking to high-net-worth, high-rollers who talked to me like a trusted friend. Meanwhile, my personal gambling behavior grew more irresponsible and more outrageous. I placed

increasingly reckless bets, one right after the other. Even after my most devastating financial losses, I would wake up the next day and gamble again.

I travelled to the world's most glamorous gambling destinations: Monte Carlo, London, Monaco, Dominican Republic, Panama, and the Bahamas. I enjoyed the perks of concierge service wherever I went. The casinos treated me like a star because I was their cash cow. I lost huge amounts of money and kept coming back to lose more.

I depended on my bookmaking business to fund my personal gambling habit and lavish lifestyle. I concealed my earnings from the IRS by repeatedly filing false tax returns. Even after the FBI raid, I never considered stopping either the bookmaking or the personal gambling. Plus, more states legalized gambling and I had clients who worked as judges, federal agents, and police officers.

In 2017, I had a very bad string of baccarat losses at the Wynn Las Vegas. To resolve my significant debts, the casino and I met with a financial specialist at the Clark County District Attorney's Office. Thankfully, we agreed to a payment plan. It was humiliating to lose so much that I ended up in that city official's office.

Thankfully, most of my clients were financially secure and placed bets for fun. I used to consider myself one of those secure, successful, lifelong gamblers. Now, after the FBI raided my house again, I don't think of myself that way anymore. I clearly let my bookmaking enterprise grow too large. I lied to myself about the serious nature of illegal money laundering. I lived in denial about the consequences and now must pay the price.

Leading up to my second FBI raid, I lost an enormous amount of money playing baccarat. I got trapped in the sick cycle of gambling addiction, risking my family's financial security for that winning rush. This legal process gives me a chance to reckon with my selfish decisions and plan for a better future. I do want a more peaceful life for my family and for me. Before I find that peace, I know I must answer for my years of inexcusable, criminal conduct.

Final Thoughts

In 2015, Rachel and I separated amicably. Three years later, I married Nicole, the love of my life. Four months later, I lost my brother, Shawn, to a heart attack. He was 47. Nicole and I welcomed our son, Kingston, on May 27, 2021. I am delighted to report that all my children are healthy and flourishing. Lauren is married and working in the visual design field. Haley works for her mother in an OSHA compliance consulting business. Brooke currently studies sports management at Oregon University. Sage attends Catholic school and excels in volleyball.

Thankfully, Rachel achieved meaningful, long-term sobriety with the help of Alcoholics Anonymous. She has never been happier and I am very proud of her. Her recovery showed me how much she had hurt herself with alcohol. It reminded me of how alcohol destroyed my father's health and affected our entire family. My younger brother, Andy, has struggled with opioid and heroin addiction for many years.

This legal process forced me to confront the hard truth of my self-destructive behavior. For a long time, my family and I have worried about my heavy binge drinking and compulsive gambling. Especially in the last five years, I have been drinking excessively on casino floors while placing extraordinarily reckless bets. I drank too much tequila, wine, and potato vodka which caused occasional memory loss. Several times, I required intravenous re-hydration treatments in my casino hotel room after a night of heavy drinking.

As I face financial ruin and a prison sentence, I can absolutely admit that gambling and alcohol abuse turned into a disaster for me. I certainly owe my family a future of sobriety and wise decision-making. I want to be the best possible father to Kingston by staying away from reckless gambling, illegal bookmaking, and alcohol. I do not want to keep secrets from my loved ones or throw away money we need to support ourselves.

To stay on the right track, I have seen a licensed therapist who specializes in gambling addiction. I have also attended Gamblers Anonymous (GA) meetings where I heard stories like mine. I learned more about the Twelve Steps and how gambling addicts can use them to heal. It is so easy to gamble everything away and fall into despair. I am very sorry and embarrassed that I facilitated such dangerous risk-taking.

Today, young people are throwing away their futures on smartphone gambling apps. This problem is growing more serious in America and around the world. The World Health Organization recently projected the legal global online gambling market will reach \$700 billion annually by 2028. The Campaign for Fairer Gambling (CFG) has estimated U.S. consumers and the economy are projected to lose at least \$1 trillion to online gambling by 2028.

I am already using my story to raise awareness of the dangers of gambling addiction. I am currently working on a book and exploring other ways to reach an audience. Recently, I volunteered with the Prison Professors Charitable Corporation, a nonprofit that creates educational programming and training materials for justice-impacted individuals. I recorded content with founder Michael Santos and spoke at a conference with his associate, Justin Paperny. With Justin and Michael, I emphasized my remorse for breaking the law and my determination to build a new life of hard work and service.

Your Honor, I had a moral obligation to obey the law and I failed. My actions exploited problem gamblers, hurt their families, and facilitated illegal money laundering. I accept full responsibility for my criminal acts, including falsifying my tax returns. I hope young people will pay close attention to where I went wrong and learn from my mistakes.

Thank you for considering all that I've offered through this narrative. If you find me worthy, please consider showing leniency at my sentencing hearing.

Respectfully,

Mathew Bowyer